

Edition 10 – 3

Summer 2009

Research Précis

Best Practices: Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities

Creating a better tomorrow...

Title: **Midwestern Prevention Project**

Overview:

The *Midwestern Prevention Project (MPP)* is a comprehensive, community-based prevention program designed to reduce use of cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana among adolescents by addressing the multiple influences adolescents regularly face.

Target: Youth typically in transition to middle school or junior high school (usually grades 6 and 7)

Extent/Duration of Program: The program lasts three years with extension—ten sessions that focus on increasing skills to resist pressures to use drugs in the first year, five booster program sessions in the second, community organization and a policy program in the third, and a media program from that point forward.

Program Costs:

- Over a three-year period, program costs total about \$175,000, including costs of school component curriculum materials and training for 20 teachers, parent program training for 20 parents/principal and student peer leaders, community leader training, and 1,000 participating middle school students.
- Teachers receive a two-day training for the school program, followed by annual half-day training sessions. Principals and volunteer parents receive one-day training as leaders for the parent component. Community leader training takes place over several sessions.

For further information, or to order:

University of Southern California
1441 Eastlake Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90089

Phone: 626-457-6687

Fax: 626-457-6695

E-mail: karenbur@usc.edu

Principles/Approaches/Components: The *Midwestern Prevention Project* is often referred to as *Project STAR* (Students Taught Awareness and Resistance), as it was named where it began in 1984 in Kansas City, Missouri. MPP is based on the premise that difficulties in adolescent substance abuse stem from both supply and demand. The program features numerous components that are designed to address substance abuse factors in both realms. On the demand side, the first year school component, including group discussion, role-playing, and homework involving the family, focuses on increasing skills to resist pressures to use drugs. On the supply side, the program tries to change the environment by involving the entire community in drug-prevention activities. A parent component beginning in the second year includes workshops on parenting skills and neighborhood activities, with at least three planning meetings and an educational seminar. A community organization component in the third year brings together and trains community leaders to plan and implement drug-prevention services. A policy component in the third year uses the same leaders in an attempt to change local ordinances to further restrict students' access to cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana. Finally, an ongoing multi-year media component employs television, radio, and newspapers to introduce

the program and its activities to the community and further reinforce the above components.

Evidence-based Effectiveness: Numerous studies from 1984 through 1990 indicate that when compared to control youth, young people involved in the MPP have experienced reductions of up to 40 percent in daily smoking and marijuana use, and smaller reductions in alcohol use through grade 12 and even hard drug use through early adulthood (age 23). Findings also indicate increased parent-child communication about drug use as well as improvement in prevention programs, activities, and services among community leaders.

Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) connections:

A.i - Activities that address the consequences of violence and the illegal use of drugs.

A.ii - Activities that promote a sense of individual responsibility.

A.iv - Activities that teach students to recognize social and peer pressure to use drugs illegally and the skills for resisting illegal drug use.

B - Activities that involve families, community sectors, and a variety of drug and violence prevention providers in setting clear expectations against violence and illegal use of drugs and appropriate consequences for violence and illegal use of drugs.

National Standards connections:

Grades 6 through 7

Health Education Standard 1 – Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 3 – Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.

Health Education Standard 7 – Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

National Health Education Standards, Second Edition: Achieving Excellence. American Cancer Society, 2007.

Counseling: Personal and Social Development Standard C: Students will understand safety and survival skills.

ASCA National Standards for Students. American School Counselor Association, 2004.

Family and Consumer Sciences Area of Study 15.0 (Parenting): Comprehensive Standard – Evaluate the effects of parenting roles and responsibilities on strengthening the well-being of individuals and families.

National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Second Edition. National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences, 2008.

Recognition and additional reports:

The following organizations/institutions have recognized the *Midwestern Prevention Project*. The organizations are in alphabetical order and the status of the recognition is in parentheses.

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (Blueprints Model Program)

Promising Practices Network (Proven Program)

SAMHSA (Effective Program)

GENERAL NOTES: The intent of the above synthesis and correlations is to assist teachers and school administrators dedicated to using best practices to reduce violence and substance abuse among students. To our knowledge, the information was current upon publication. However, details pertaining to status of program recognition, research and findings, costs, and contact information are subject to change.

Correlations to the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) federally approved activities and to national education standards have been limited in depth (“standard” level only) and breadth (number of standards and subjects) due to the encompassing nature of many programs that typically qualify as model or exemplary. The correlations listed should not be viewed as exhaustive.

Designed Instruction’s effective SDFS program research series was funded by the United States Department of Education. For information on other effective programs for promoting safe and drug-free schools and communities, visit www.designedinstruction.com/learningleads/effective-sdfs-programs.html

DISCLAIMER OF ENDORSEMENT: Designed Instruction, LLC does not officially endorse resources and information available through this document or otherwise provided in Web pages devoted to Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities other than those links that lead to resources wholly developed by Designed Instruction and solely distributed on the Designed Instruction Web site.

© 2009 Designed Instruction, LLC. All rights reserved.